Lavender Library, Archives
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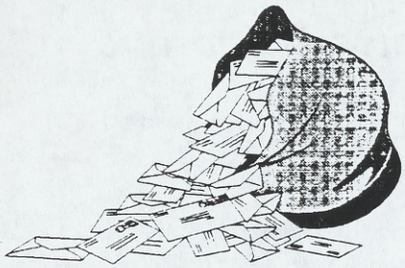

Lambda Letters Project

32559

Vol. 2, No. 6 June, 1994 6212 Silverton Way, Carmichael, California 95608 Phone (916) 965-6851

Lambda Letters Needs Skilled Fund-Raisers

The truth is that, although many of you have been very generous, Lambda Letters is not generating the income needed to become a *fully* effective voice for our community. Unless we can find volunteers with good fund-raising skills, Lambda Letters' full potential for service to the community will never be realized.

We are proud of our program staff and of what they and you have accomplished so far. Our newsletter and sample letters have grown more and more professional in content and appearance. Large volumes of your letters are getting to the right place at the right time, helping push through the bills that we care about. (See the Lambda Letters Scoreboard on page 2.) You have sent us over 11,000 letters so far this year and we now have members in 41 of California's 58 counties. Your influence, through Lambda Letters, is growing. Legislators are now coming to us for assistance in persuading other legislators to support their bills.

However, we have never attracted a team of volunteers with good fund-raising skills. To become really effective, we need members from all across the state, and we need to collect many more letters than we do now. But we cannot support that kind of

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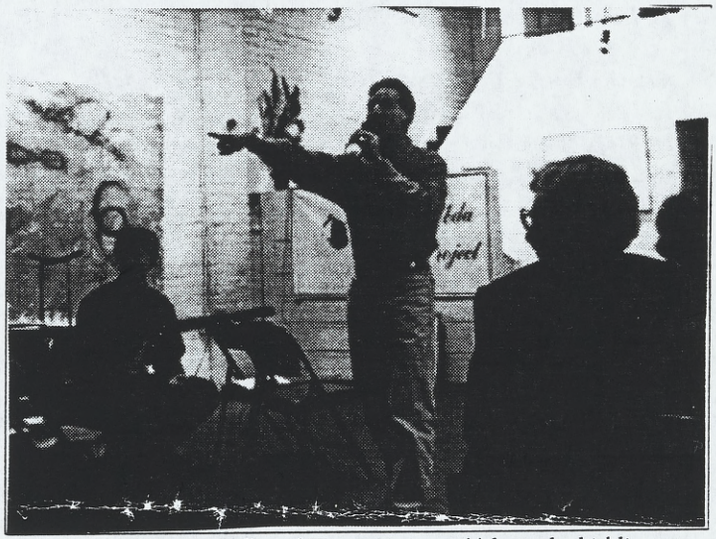
Auction Proceeds Were Disappointing

In some ways the annual auction in Sacramento was a rousing success. Our volunteers worked hard to prepare for the event and we had a very professional looking program designed by an excellent team of volunteers and printed at no cost by Sacramento Quick Print. Our guest auctioneers, Karla Carmony and Tom Amiano, did a marvelous job and everyone had a very enjoyable time.



Karla Carmony (l) and Tom Amiano (r) kept the bidding fast and furious.

However, our proceeds were less than hoped for. We took in $1,300, but our original plan had been to take in $1,500 and to allocate that full amount to Lambda Letters. Since making that plan, we decided to split the proceeds with the Sacramento MCC Church to thank them for their support of us over the years and to help them recover from the fire at their church. We had hoped that our combined efforts would bring in more money than actually did come in. The economy is tight and there were a number of fund-raising events in the community at about the same time as our event.

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Lambda Letters Project

Statement of Purpose

To promote people of color, feminist, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and AIDS/HIV+ status advocacy and to bring people of color, women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and persons affected by or living with AIDS/HIV+ status into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof.

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Fred Dillon, Legislative Analyst: People of Color Issues, (916) 444-3350

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Faces of Sacramento

Change of Address Form

Please change my address to:

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Name

_____
Address

_____
City, ZIP Code

_____
Phone

Send changes of address (incl. name, new address, city, ZIP code, and phone number) to Lambda Letters Project, 6212 Silverton Way, Carmichael, CA 95608.

Lambda Letters Scoreboard

Here is an update on legislation that our members have written on in the past few months:

State Bills

S.B. 2061 (Author, Gary Hart–D): Would allow members of the Public Employees Retirement System (state and local government employees) to enroll their domestic partners in their employer-provided health insurance plan. Lambda Letters supported S.B. 2061. Passed all Senate committees but failed first vote in the full Senate. Will be voted on again the week after press time for this issue of the newsletter.

A.B. 3374 (Author, Johan Klehs–D): Would increase penalties on the owners of sweat shop places of employment that violate labor laws. Lambda Letters supported A.B. 3374. Passed in the Assembly. Now must be considered by the Senate.

A.B. 2810 (Author, Richard Katz–D): Would allow statewide registration of domestic partners. Lambda Letters supports A.B. 2810. Passed by the Assembly. Now must be considered by the Senate. *It would be helpful to write letters to the editors of local newspapers voicing your support for this legislation.*

A.B. 2815 (Author, Mickey Conroy–R) and A.B. 109X (Author, Diane Martinez–D): Both bills concern the court-ordered testing for HIV (AIDS) antibodies of persons charged with or convicted of specific sex crimes. Lambda Letters opposed both bills. At this writing, A.B. 2815 had passed the Assembly and A.B. 109X is likely to do so.

Federal Bills

S. 636 (Author, Edward Kennedy–D): Imposes significant penalties on those who block access to abortion clinics or who intimidate women trying to use those clinics. Lambda Letters supported the legislation. The bill passed and was signed by the President. See the article on page 6 showing how the California Congressional delegation voted on this bill.

Auction Disappointing

Continued from page 1

In summary, Lambda Letters netted about $650 when it had hoped to take in $1,500. We will survive the shortfall, but we'll have to make it up by finding additional sources of income. Any contributions our members can make will be greatly appreciated.

Lambda Letters Progress Report

Letters Collected

April	2,347 letters
This year	8,935 letters

Dollars Spent

April	$1,166
This year	$4,194

Can You Help?

Please support the very important work of the Lambda Letters Project with your contributions.

Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Issue

Act Now for Suicide Prevention

This month's gay/lesbian/bisexual issue was a tough choice for this writer between the Equal Employment Opportunity Act and the Gay and Lesbian Youth Suicide Prevention Act. Both issues are important, and I hope our members will write their Congressperson in support of both. For the purposes of Lambda Letters, this composer chose to focus on the latter, because although adults need to support both Acts to make them realities for our community, gay and lesbian youth have fewer measures of recourse open to them during strictly personal times of crisis. And while adults may fight for their employment rights in the present, preservation of gay and lesbian youth are the future of our movement for justice and equal treatment.

Suicide is the third greatest killer of all young people. According to the Equity Institute, youth suicides in the U.S. have increased 200 percent over the past 10 years, and approximately 40 percent of these are related to sexual orientation and/or race. There is no doubt that the stereotyping and shameless harassment causes gay and lesbian youth, who are two-to-three times more likely to attempt suicide, to succeed in taking their own lives.

H.R. 4148, the Gay and Lesbian Youth Suicide Prevention Act, introduced by Representative Martin Meehan, would create a commission within the Department of Health and Human Services to include suicide prevention programs among high-risk gay and lesbian youth who are currently an invisible majority in the at-risk teen population. Such programs give support to gay youth and may educate the perpetrators of violence as well to stop the cycle of harassment and tragic loss of life.

There are private reasons which figured into my choice, as well as responsibility to the future of our community. This corespondent lost her first lover to suicide. She was 20 years old when she took her own life. Institutionalizing a suicide prevention program such as those proposed in H.R. 4148 might have saved a piece of my own life as well.

Advertising Rates

Business-card sized ads (3.5" × 2") $10 per issue
Quarter-page ads $20 per issue
Half-page ads $30 per issue
Full-page ads $50 per issue

Send payment and your camera-ready copy, along with your name and phone number, to:
Lambda Letters Project
6212 Silverton Way
Carmichael, CA 95608
Deadline is the 25th of each month.

Fund-Raisers Needed

Continued from page 1

effort on the money now coming in to Lambda Letters.

Your continuing support is very important to the work that we do. Please continue to contribute what you can. However, it is essential that we assemble a team of volunteers with good fund-raising skills. A fund-raising committee in Sacramento is crucial. However, we also have large numbers of members in San Diego, Fresno, and Sonoma counties, and in San Francisco and Los Angeles. It would be extremely helpful if fund-raising committees could be formed in those communities also.

Please take time to consider this issue. Do you have fund-raising skills and experience? Whether or not you do, would you be willing to join a regional fund-raising committee in your community? If so, we need you! If you are willing to help, please complete the form below and return it with this month's letters. The future of Lambda Letters is in your hands!

Yes! I believe in Lambda Letters. I will secure the future of its important work by joining a fund-raising committee in my area.

Name

Address

City, ZIP Code

Phone

Women's Issue

Ensuring Women's Health Care Reform

As Congress moves toward action on health care reform, it is vital that women's health care needs are addressed. Of specific interest is coverage for comprehensive reproductive health services for women and their families. Included within the reform must be coverage of abortion and family planning services.

Last year the Congressional Caucus for Women published a list of eight principles that must be incorporated in the health care reform. Among these were provisions for important preventive, diagnostic, and treatment services for women regardless of income, employment status, or eligibility for public assistance. Any basic health benefits package must include important preventive, diagnostic, and treatment services for women. Such services include prenatal care and delivery services, mammography and pap smears, family-planning services, and substance abuse services.

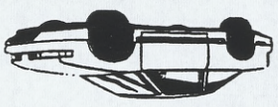
Sixteen million women in the U.S. had no health insurance from any source in 1990. Half of these uninsured were employed. Women also have health care needs that differ significantly from those of men. Diseases unique to women, such as breast cancer and other reproductive tract cancers, require special research and services. Other health problems, such as heart disease and AIDS, may require different treatment or interventions in women. Thus not only must access to insurance for women be increased but this insurance must respond to the unique and special health care needs of women across their lifespan.

Prevention saves money, yet most insurance companies do not cover preventive or screening services, including those for woman-specific problems such as mammography, pap smears, and screening for chlamydia and other sexually transmitted diseases that can cause infertility. These important preventive services should be covered under the basic benefits plan in any health care reform package.

The current health care reform policy that is supported by the Congressional Caucus for Women is the one sponsored by William Ford, Chair of the Educational and Labor Committee. You are urged to write to your House and Senate representatives and ask for their support for this version of health care reform.

Article excerpted from the Health Care Reform and Women's Health paper published by the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues.

VIOLATION



If you have to go to traffic school it might as well be gay/lesbian!

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415-282-8104

People of Color Issue

Welfare Benefits Threatened

This month we are asking you to write in opposition to the Presidential administration's proposal to finance welfare reform by reducing welfare benefits to legal immigrants and refugees. This would be done by extending the deeming provisions of the various welfare programs, provisions which specify the time period in which the income of a sponsor of a legal immigrant or refugee is "deemed" to be available to the immigrant. The inclusion of a sponsor's income usually disqualifies the immigrant from most federal assistance programs.

Current deeming limits are temporarily five years (until 1996 when they will return to three years) for Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) and three years for food stamps and Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The Administration's Task Force on Welfare Reform is considering extending these limits to 5–10 years in cases of sponsors with high incomes.

Extending the deeming provisions is essentially the same as cutting benefits to legal immigrants. Deeming involves assumptions about the family life and availability of the sponsor's income to the permanent resident, and ignores the possibility of abusive situations that would make it impossible for the resident to reside with the sponsor, much less receive a portion of the salary. In addition, the extension of deeming could result in American-born children being denied welfare eligibility. Medicaid is

Continued on page 7

More Money Needed for HIV in State Budget

Governor Wilson's 1994–95 proposed state AIDS budget contains no new funds for prevention education and HIV testing. Level funding for HIV disease is both shortsighted and inhumane. The Legislature did add $5 million to a proposed budget, but our task is to keep it there. This proposal now goes before a joint Assembly Senate Conference Committee which is chaired by Senator Alquist, who is also Chair of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee. This month we are focusing our HIV letter on this issue of writing to Senator Alquist. It may be a cliche, but in the case of HIV/AIDS an ounce of prevention really is worth a pound of cure. The Legislature has augmented the Governor's steady state budget proposals for HIV prevention education and testing by $5 million in order to stem the rising tide of HIV disease. To save California money in the long run, these funds must be allocated.

As our letter states, without a cure or viable vaccine, prevention is the best tool we have to control the spread of HIV. Because of inflation and subsequéent budget cuts, the $3 million added to this year's budget for AIDS prevention education activities would barely restore us to the 1988–89 level of funding. ($15.1 million is the Governor's level funding request.) Yet there are data from San Francisco and elsewhere that reveal that prevention education does work. It is definitely cost-effective, not only from an economic standpoint but, even more importantly, from a human standpoint in terms of lives saved.

HIV antibody testing programs are a cornerstone of California's efforts in controlling the spread of HIV. Demand is increasing for testing (36 percent more tests were conducted in 1991, and an additional 28 percent more in 1992, for a total of over 330,000 HIV antibody tests in that year). In each of the past two years the Governor has provided necessary midyear emergency augmentations in the amount of $4 million and $3.1 million. Yet the base budget of $8.6 million for testing has not been increased to reflect this need. We must increase the budget from the start rather than having to change plans when additional, badly needed money is appropriated late in the year.

If the Legislature keeps these augmentations in the budget which it sends to the Governor, you can be sure that Lambda Letters will be lobbying him to keep his blue pencil off these important dollars.

Adults * Adolescents * Children

BEA BETZNER, M.F.C.C
License No. MFC 30303

Counseling for the *Rainbow* Community

5120 Manzanita, Suite 100, Carmichael, CA 95608
Evening Hours Sliding Fee (916) 564 - 8701

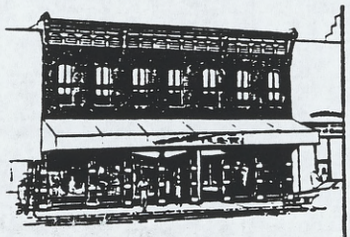

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Table 1. House Vote on Freedom of Access to Clinics Act

Name	Party	Yea	Nay	Phone
Baker, Bill	R		x	510-932-8899
Becerra, Xavier	D	x		213-722-0405
Beilenson, Anthony	D	x		818-999-1990
Berman, Howard	D	x		818-891-0543
Brown, George	D	x		714-825-2472
Calvert, Ken	R		x	714-682-1992
Condit, Gary	D	x		209-527-1914
Cox, Chistopher	R		x	714-496-2244
Cunningham, Randy	R	x		619-737-8438
Dellums, Ronald	D	x		510-763-0370
Dixon, Julian	D	x		213-678-5424
Dooley, Calvin	D	x		209-733-8348
Doolittle, John	R	–	–	916-786-5560
Dornan, Robert	R		x	714-971-9292
Dreier, David	R		x	818-339-9078
Edwards, Don	D	x		408-247-1711
Eshoo, Anna	D	x		415-323-2984
Farr, Sam	D	x		408-649-3555
Fazio, Vic	D	x		916-666-5521
Filner, Bob	D	x		619-236-6688
Gallegly, Elton	R		x	805-522-4487
Hamburg, Dan	D	x		707-462-2515
Harman, Jane	D	x		310-348-8220
Herger, Wally	R	–	–	916-893-8363
Horn, Steve	R	x		310-985-8300
Huffington, Michael	R	x		805-682-6600
Hunter, Duncan	R		x	619-579-3001
Kim, Jay	R		x	909-396-6173
Lantos, Tom	D	x		415-342-0300
Lehman, Richard	D	x		209-487-5760
Lewis, Jerry	R		x	909-862-6030
Martinez, Mathew	D	x		213-722-9719
Matsui, Robert	D	x		916-551-2846
McCandless, Al	R	x		609-340-2900
McKeon, Howard	R		x	805-251-2257
Miller, George	D	x		510-602-1880
Mineta, Norman	D	x		408-984-6676
Moorhead, Carlos	R		x	818-247-8445
Packard, Ron	R		x	609-631-1364
Pelosi, Nancy	D	x		415-556-4862

Women's Issue

Freedom of Access to Clinics Act Is Now Law!

In one of a series of stunning setbacks for those who oppose a woman's right to choose, Congress passed the Freedom of Access to Clinics Act. This bill imposes significant penalties on those who block access to abortion clinics or who intimidate women trying to use those clinics. President Clinton signed the bill in late May. Both Senators Boxer and Feinstein voted for the bill.

In the House of Representatives 28 Democrats and 5 Republicans from California voted for the bill, while 1 Democrat and 15 Republicans from our state voted against it. One Democrat and two Republicans from California didn't vote. Table 1 shows who voted and how they voted. The table also shows their district phone numbers. We encourage you to call your Representative and voice your opinion on his or her vote.

Name	Party	Yea	Nay	Phone
Pombo, Richard	R		x	209-835-4247
Rohrabacher, Dana	R		x	714-847-2433
Roybal-Allard, Lucille	D	x		213-894-4870
Royce, Edward	R		x	714-992-8081
Schenk, Lynn	D	x		619-291-1430
Stark, Fortney	D	–	–	510-635-1092
Thomas, Bill	R	x		805-327-3611
Torres, Esteban	D	x		310-695-0702
Tucker, Walter	D		x	310-763-5850
Waters, Maxine	D	x		213-757-8900
Waxman, Henry	D	x		213-651-1040
Woolsey, Lynn	D	x		707-795-1462

LLP Volunteer Classifieds

Letter Stuffers Needed—*People from the Sacramento area needed to help stuff our monthly mailings. This is typically done on the first Thursday of each month at a downtown Sacramento location.*

Fund-raisers Needed—*People with fund-raising skills, or the willingness to try, are needed to form fund-raising committees in the Sacramento, Sonoma, San Francisco, Fresno, Los Angeles, and San Diego areas. We will arrange contacts between volunteers and others from their area.*

Persons interested in any of the above may send us their name, address, and phone number, or may call us at (916) 965-6851.

Attention San Diego County Residents

Please Sign Letter to S.D. Board of Supes

In June of 1993, San Diego's HIV Care Coalition (HCC), a group of over 100 organizations and individuals, and the Title II consortia for Ryan White funds sponsored a conference on needle exchange programs (NEPs). Since that time, the County of San Diego has hired a new Director of Health Services, Dr. Robert Ross. Dr. Ross has a history of supporting NEPs. Recently the HCC asked Dr. Ross to initiate community-wide meetings on the issues related to needle exchange. The next step is to ask the Board of Supervisors to cooperate and participate in these community discussions.

We believe that if the Board recognizes the importance of this issue from a public health standpoint we can obtain their support. Please sign the letter, adding any personal comments or information you find appropriate.

Thank Our Sponsors!

At the end of this newsletter you'll notice an ad for the long-distance phone service from Working Assets. We value companies and individuals who support us financially by placing an advertisement in the Lambda Letters newsletter. If and when you decide to switch your long-distance carrier to Working Assets, please leave a message for Keith Goodlett saying that you saw the ad for the company in this newsletter. It may convince him to keep the ad running, which would help Lambda Letters directly!

The same goes for the other fine people who have chosen to advertise in this issue of the newsletter. Give them a call and let them know you appreciate their support!

Welfare Benefits Threatened

Continued from page 4

based on many states of eligibility to SSI; thus these legal residents could be denied medical attention.

We need to let President Clinton know that welfare reform financing should not be accomplished by taking away from one group of the poor to support another. There must be other areas of the budget through which $2 billion could be obtained.

Lambda Letters Project Members Profile

Number of respondents:
230: 125 women, 105 men
Total membership:
710
Ethnic makeup:
196 European-Americans, 5 Jewish-Americans, 2 "mixed," 8 Native Americans, 13 Hispanic/Mexican-American/ Puerto Ricans, 5 Asians (incl. Filipino), 2 African-Americans (clearly not the makeup of California)
Sexual orientation:
117 gays, 75 lesbians, 24 heterosexuals, 11 bisexuals (mainly women), 1 self-identified "top" (a woman)
Political orientation:
79% Democratic, 2% Republican, 6% Green, 1 % Peace and Freedom, 1% Libertarian, 11% Unspecified/blank
(218 respondents voted in the last election)
Percent of respondents who sign every letter:
50
Reasons why those who don't sign every letter either sign them "only once in a while" or "do not sign very many":
They disagree with parts of the letter
They don't feel they know enough about an issue to be comfortable signing it
(Some people modify the letters themselves and write their own.)
Educational orientation:
60 with some college, incl. AA degrees; 62 with Bachelor's degrees; 117 with some post-B.A. education; 12 Ph.D.'s; 5 J.D.'s; 6 M.D.'s; 1 dentist; and 1 vet.
(again, unrepresentative of California)

Statistics compiled by Joe Heller, May, 1994.

Health Care Reform Call-in Day!

To concentrate the lobbying efforts of the gay, lesbian, and bisexual community, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has designated Tuesday, June 28, 1994, as National Health Care Reform Call-in Day. Be a part of a national grassroots voice to assure affordable/ comprehensive health care that should never be taken away. Call your Representative and Senators on this day. Ask for universal coverage, providing health care to all those residing in the U.S.; comprehensive benefits, including non-Western and alternative therapies; no restrictions for preexisting conditions; nondiscriminatory language based on sexual orientation; and permanence, ensuring that coverage cannot and will not be taken away.

She's a damn lesbian... working her whole career to advance the homosexual agenda. Call it gay-bashing if you want to. I call it standing up for traditional family values. – Senator Jesse Helms

Talk Back to Bigotry

Can we just sit back while bigots like Jesse Helms spew hatred and fear about *our* rights?

Now there's a phone company that helps you fight back.

WORKING ASSETS LONG DISTANCE provides you with cheap and easy ways to speak out on vital issues that affect *you*. Every Monday we give you FREE calls to political and business leaders so you can give them a piece of your mind. For instance, Working Assets members barraged the CEO of Cracker Barrel Restaurants with over 10,000 calls and letters urging the company to stop firing employees for being gay.

And we donate 1% of your long distance charges (at no extra cost to you) to nonprofit groups *you help choose* working for human rights, peace and the environment. Groups like the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, Planned Parenthood, the National Minority Aids Council and Greenpeace.

Now for the money-saving part. Our basic interstate rates are lower than AT&T®, MCI® and Sprint®. And Working Assets is the *only* phone company that saves you an additional 25% on calls to anyone else on our network. Naturally, we also give you clear, fiber-optic sound, 24-hour operators and easy direct dialing.

Intrigued? Try us for three months and get 60 minutes FREE. Then the next time you're outraged by anti-gay rhetoric — don't just sit back.
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